



## Planning Bulletin – Public Scoping Review

### Summary – Scoping Comments Received

In the first planning bulletin for the Price RMP, BLM encouraged you to provide written scoping comments by February 15, 2002. You can view the final scoping report which is available on the RMP website, [www.pricermp.com](http://www.pricermp.com).

Scoping is a public process designed to determine the scope of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the environmental impact statement (EIS). The scoping process gathers initial planning information from a variety of sources, including government agencies, interest groups, and individuals.

Public involvement for the Price Area Resource Management Plan is being conducted in two phases: (1) scoping as part of the NEPA process to obtain public input on issues and proposed alternatives and (2) public review and comment on the draft RMP/EIS, which will include analyzing environmental impacts and identifying the preferred alternative.

Through the six public scoping meetings, 270 people registered their attendance. The meeting format allowed each person attending to share his or her issues and concerns for the Price BLM management area. Additional comments were received through letter, email and fax. In total, approximately 600 original letters and 9,800 form letters were received. Comments were compiled according to topic, with most comments falling into roughly 12 topic areas. These include transportation access, local economic impact, administrative issues, rangeland health, special land designations (wilderness study areas), recreation/OHV, air & water quality, livestock grazing, mineral development, cultural/historic resources, wildlife/hunting, and forestry.

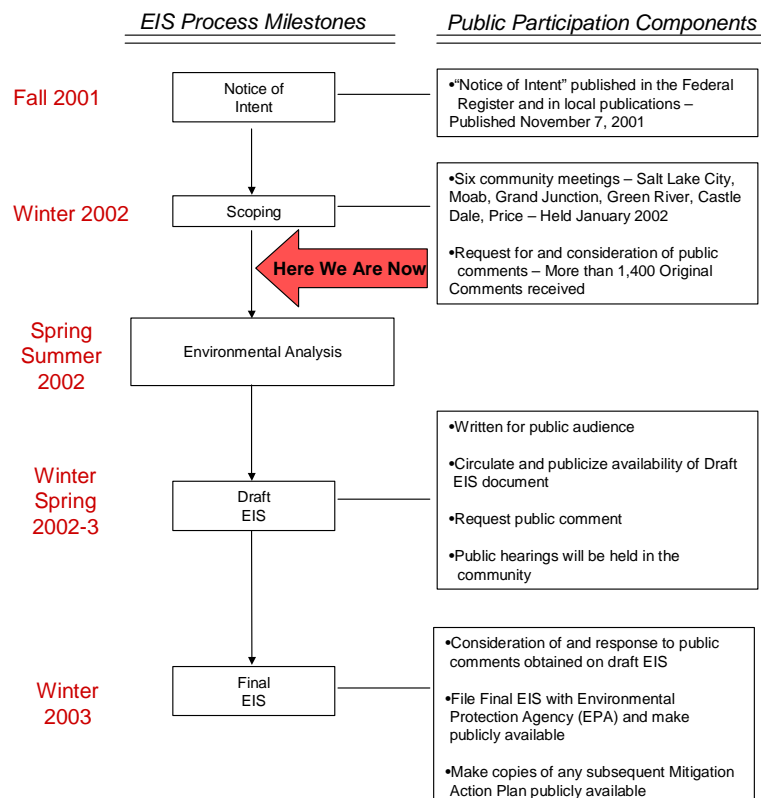
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### Plan Overview

The Bureau of Land Management's Price Field Office has initiated the process to develop a land and resource management plan (RMP) for approximately 2,500,000 acres of surface estate and 2,800,000 acres of mineral estate lands in central Utah. This plan, known as the Price Resource Management Plan, will combine the existing Price River Management Framework Plan and San Rafael RMP into a single plan.

### **Price RMP/EIS Process and Public Participation Components**



# Purpose of Scoping

The purpose of the scoping process is to identify issues important to the resource area. These issues will then serve as a guide in the development of the Resource Management Plan.

In this Scoping Process, the Bureau of Land Management approach has been one of collaboration and open dialogue. The agency has extended efforts beyond minimum requirements. For example, the agency is required to hold a scoping period that lasts 30 days, but in this case, the scoping period extended 100 days. Six meetings were held in key regional locations in and around the resource area as well as in Salt Lake City, and Grand Junction, Colorado. Comments were accepted in a variety of methods to ensure outreach to those who wanted to participate. This process is an excellent method to educate both the general public about the management of the public lands, and for the agency to gauge the concerns of those who have a stake in the area.

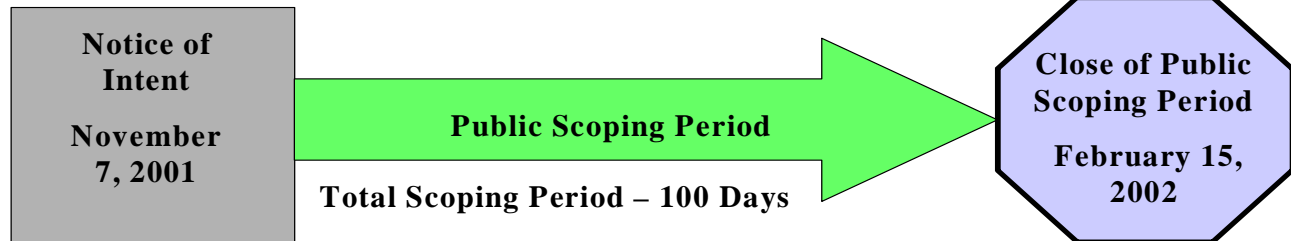
This bulletin is intended to reflect in a qualitative way, the issues identified through the scoping process. It includes the concepts discussed at the public scoping meetings, letters from individuals and organizations, coordination with city and county officials, in addition to collaborative input from public land and resource management agencies (Forest Service, US Fish & Wildlife, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Division of Oil, Gas & Mines, State Parks, etc.). Following this collaborative process will ensure a balanced and pragmatic approach as the Resource Management Plan is developed for the Price Field Office Area.



## Issues from Scoping

Following is a brief list of the issues identified through the scoping process.

- Transportation/Access
- Local Economic Impact
- Administrative Issues
- Rangeland Health
- Special Land Designations
- Recreation/OHV
- Air & Water Quality
- Livestock Grazing
- Mineral Development
- Cultural/Heritage Resources
- Wildlife/Hunting
- Forestry



### Day 1-14

- Notice of Intent Issued
- Schedule Public Scoping Meetings

### Day 15-30

- Issue Press Releases
- Develop and Issue Planning Bulletin #1

### Day 69-85

- January 15-31, 2002
- Hold Public Scoping Meetings in Six Cities – Salt Lake City, Moab, Grand Junction, Green River, Castle Dale, and Price

### Day 100

- Public Scoping Period Closes

# Issues Identified In Scoping

**Transportation Access** – Motorized access to resources in the management area is a key concern. Access as discussed in the scoping process includes recreational, administrative, and use management.

**Local Economic Impact** – Many local economic interests are tied directly to public lands management issues. Decisions regarding grazing, access, recreation, mining and mineral development, and hunting and fishing have local economic impacts.

**Administrative Issues** – Concern was expressed regarding administrative consistency for public lands management across resource issues.

**Rangeland Health** – The condition of rangeland was identified as an issue through the scoping process. The rangeland health is directly tied to grazing, wildlife, visual qualities for recreation, and water quality issues.

**Special Land Designations (i.e. Wilderness Study Areas)** Many comments received through scoping addressed special land designations such as wilderness. Comments include preference for more wilderness study area designations, challenge of existing designations and preference for no future designations.

**Recreation/OHV** – Recreation in the management area includes scenic vistas, dispersed camping areas, use of off-highway vehicles, hunting and fishing, wildlife viewing and many other activities. Recreation on public lands is critical to the multiple-use management concept.



**Air & Water Quality** – The issues of air and water quality are closely related to resource extraction, rangeland health, and recreational use of the area.

**Livestock Grazing** – Scoping comments pertaining to grazing focused on rangeland health, economic impacts, and lifestyle heritage.

**Mineral Development** – Mineral development, including coal, coalbed-methane, and other development are a central part of this planning effort.

**Cultural/Historic Resources** – Protection of cultural and historic resources is key in local and national interest in this planning area. This includes ancient civilization artifacts, paleontological resources, as well as pioneer settlement and twentieth century use of the area resources.

**Wildlife/Hunting** – The area is home to many species of game and non-game animals. Management of these species is closely tied to rangeland health, recreation, water quality, and access.

**Forestry** – Some sections of the planning area have forest resources. Management of these resources relates to rangeland health, air and water quality, and wildlife issues.



## Issues Outside BLM's Scope

**Classification of Roads Under RS2477** – This issue is currently tied up in litigation and is awaiting decision. BLM will make every effort to produce a workable transportation plan in conjunction with the RMP.

**Wilderness Designation and Existing Wilderness Study Areas (WSA)**- A large number of comments were received asking that the wilderness designation process be completed. This issue is only resolved with Congressional designation and is beyond agency scope in relation to existing WSAs.

**Wild and Scenic River Designation** -BLM will be conducting an extensive process to determine those river segments that are eligible for consideration as Wild and Scenic, and then those segments that are actually suitable. Following that process, designation can only be completed by Congress.

**Potential San Rafael National Monument Designation**- Emery County is considering a proposal for National Monument designation of the San Rafael Swell area. This is not within the scope of the RMP at this time, as such designation is a role of the President of the United States. Information and comments regarding the monument proposal should be addressed to the Emery County Public Lands Council ([www.emerycounty.com](http://www.emerycounty.com)).



# Planning Criteria

Various legal mandates will guide the planning criteria, as well as input from the scoping process. The criteria that will guide the planning process and creation of management alternatives for the environmental impact statement and Final Resource Management Plan include but are not limited to the following:

- This plan will recognize the existence of valid existing rights.
- Lands covered in the RMP will be public lands, which include split estate lands, managed by BLM.
- The BLM will use a collaborative and multi-jurisdictional approach, where possible, to jointly determine the desired future condition of Public Lands.
- The BLM will strive to ensure that its management prescriptions are consistent as possible to other planning jurisdictions, within the boundaries described by law and policy.
- Final management prescriptions will consider a range of alternatives that focus on the relative values of resources and ensure responsiveness to the issues.
- Sensitive watersheds will be identified and watershed conditions determined, in particular on Utah Category One (A,B and C) watersheds and those HUC-8 sub-basins ranked highest in the Utah Interagency Colorado River Salinity Ranking Process (BLM, NRCS, USGS, BOR).
- The socioeconomic impacts of the alternatives will be addressed.
- The BLM will use current scientific information, research, new technologies and the results of inventory, monitoring and coordination, to determine appropriate local and regional management strategies that will enhance or restore impaired ecosystems.
- Management of existing Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) and new WSA's established through planning will be guided by the Interim Management Policy (IMP) for Lands Under Wilderness Review. Land use allocations made for WSA's must be consistent with the IMP and with other laws, regulations and policies related to WSA management. The RMP must also address how these lands would be managed if released by Congress from WSA status. If areas are designated as wilderness by Congress, they will be managed to preserve their wilderness values, according to applicable laws and policy.
- Comprehensive Land Health Standards will apply to all activities and uses and will generally be evaluated on a watershed basis. Adjustments to current livestock grazing or wildlife forage allocations would be considered in accordance with Rangeland Health Standards and Guides. Standards and guides would be applicable to all alternatives.
- Baseline Reasonable Foreseeable Management/Development (RFD) scenarios will be developed and portrayed based on historical, existing, and projected levels for all programs.
- Planning will include the formal "Call for Coal Resource and Other Information" as required by 43 CFR 3420.1-2.
- Indian Tribe coordination will be made to identify sites, areas, and objects important to their cultural and religious heritage.
- Paleontological and cultural resources will be evaluated for use allocations, if appropriate, including provisions for interpretation, preservation, conservation and enhancement.
- The decisions of this plan will comply with the Endangered Species Act and follow interagency agreements with the USFWS regarding Section 7 Consultation Process.
- Areas potentially suitable for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), and other special management designations will be identified and brought forward for analysis in the RMP.
- All river segments will be considered, and determinations of eligibility, suitability, tentative classification, and protective management will be made in accordance with Section 5 (d) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and BLM Manual 8351. Public nominations will be requested.
- Vegetation management objectives or desired future conditions will be developed for all areas. Limits will be identified on the type and amount of disturbance that will be allowed before mitigation is required.
- Management actions will be responsive to the issues, concerns, and opportunities identified for resolution in this plan.
- Decisions regarding OHVuse will be consistent with the BLM's National OHV Strategy.

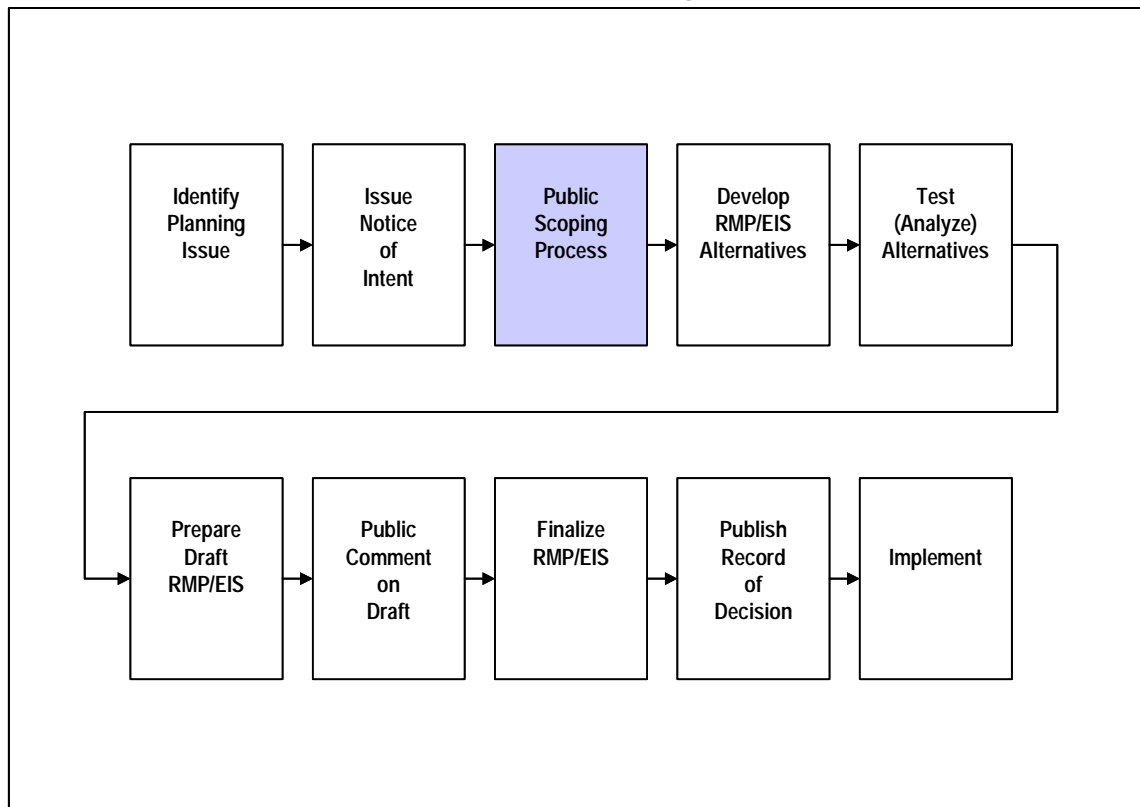


# Next Steps

The process of developing the Resource Management Plan is well underway. The public scoping process comments BLM received are key to the next step of developing the draft management alternatives, or as identified in the graphic below, the RMP/EIS Alternatives.

The development of alternatives will include considering the issues raised in scoping and developing a reasonable range of management approaches to each issue. The alternatives must be in compliance with legal mandates such as the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA), NEPA, the Clean Water Act, Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, and many others.

The development of alternatives will include professional land managers, elected officials, and cooperating agencies. Once developed, the alternatives will be made available for public review and comment as the Draft EIS/RMP. Analysis will be completed to ascertain and evaluate the impact of the management alternatives on the environment -- natural and social -- including economic considerations.



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# Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Price Resource Management Plan



Price Field Office  
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PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
ALEXANDRIA, VA  
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